

THE STATE CAPITOL AT HARRISBURG

In the following statement the Board of Public Grounds and Buildings have endeavored to give a complete and exact account of the moneys so far expended and under contract to be expended in the erection, equipment and ornamentation of the State Capitol. They would have preferred to have waited until all of the obligations incurred had been paid, but, since an effort has been made to have the subject meet the exigencies of a political campaign, they feel that accurate information ought at once to be given to the people.

The aggregate of cost would appear to be large if no proper consideration be given to the magnitude of the task imposed upon the Board. The Capitol has a front of 525 feet, a width of from 218 to 270 feet, and is eight stories in height, inclusive of the basement. It contains 475 rooms and more floor space than that of the Capitol at Washington, and more than that of the Capitol at Albany. While in Washington the different departments occupy separate buildings, at Harrisburg all of the branches of the Government are provided for in the Capitol itself.

The metallic cases, the contract for which was awarded upon the schedule of 1902, before the present Board came into existence, ought to be regarded not as furniture, but as utensils, and are so constructed as to ensure as nearly as possible the records from fire and destruction. Several of the items are for material and work which might, with propriety, be treated as essential additions to the building necessary to its utilization. Any one at all interested in the subject, had he given the time to it, could have seen from the contract made by the Building Commission, which was in print, that the \$4,000,000 appropriated by the Legislature provided only for construction. No one could suppose for a moment that it covered equipment. The duty of providing for furniture, ornamentation, electric lighting, cases, panels and all forms of equipment, was left to the Board. The Legislature, while the construction was in progress, after the contract had been made, created several new departments, in-

cluding those of the Highways, Health and the Constabulary, and this rendered necessary the fitting up of the eighth story which had been left as an attic by the Building Commission. During the period arrangements had to be made for a general and a special session of the Legislature. The Board, confronted with these responsibilities, met them honestly, carefully and wisely. Had they been parsimonious they would have shown their incapacity and would have received censure in the present and condemnation so long as the building shall last. Their effort was so to accomplish their task that the results should be commensurate with the importance of the Commonwealth and creditable to its worthy people. They believe they have succeeded. It is the judgment of capable critics who have examined the Capitol that it takes very high rank among the most important structures in America, if it does not surpass them. The appointments are as they ought to be in keeping with the building. Pennsylvania may well be proud of it as an achievement.

The Board have been more than ordinarily watchful in order to prevent possible abuse. They employed the very competent architect who designed the building at a compensation one per cent. less than that usually paid to architects and one per cent. less than that paid to him by the Building Commission. He ransacked Europe to get suggestions from the great buildings erected in the past and he studied artistic development in its best sources. He gave to the decoration of this building the utmost outcome of his training and researches inspired by the desire to realize the ambition of his life and to win a worthy professional fame among men in days to come. He designed all of the furniture and decorations so that they should be accommodated to the spaces and be in accord with the surroundings of each room and he prepared plans showing all of the details. The Board then had a special schedule prepared in which each item was described with particularity and with reference to the plans. To each item the architect affixed the price at which in his judgment it ought to be secured. The Board then advertised the schedule for three weeks in fifteen newspapers in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Scranton, York, Erie, and elsewhere, the advertisement and schedule setting forth that the materials were for the furnishing and equipment of the new Capitol and that no bids would be entertained above the figures given by the architect. There were forty-one items on the schedule. The contract was awarded on only two of

these items at the figures named by the architect and the other thirty-nine ranged from three per cent. to seventy-six per cent. below them. It was awarded as an entire contract and to the lowest bidder. The Board believed, and had good reason to believe, that they had made an advantageous arrangement for the Commonwealth. All of this was done in the most public manner and if any one then thought to the contrary he gave no hint of the fact to the Board.

No bill was finally settled until the article had been measured or weighed as the schedule required. Every bill before being paid had the certificate of the architect and superintendent as to its accuracy. To the greater part of them the Board required the contractor to add an affidavit of its correctness. In several instances the Governor personally, as a further test of accuracy, sent two men to verify the measurements. Moreover, the work in each room is specifically described in the plans and bills and any one who may be so inclined may make the measurements and tests for himself.

There is no known method of determining whether the Capitol has cost too much or too little except by the judgment of experts or by comparison. The Capitol at Washington cost \$15,000,000; that at Albany, still incomplete, \$24,265,082; the City Hall in Philadelphia \$18,243,334.86; the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York \$10,000,000 (estimated)—in each instance for construction alone without the equipment.

The building and its appointments are here to speak for themselves. So far as we know not a dollar has been mispent. The Board have paid for nothing contained in the contract of the Building Commission. With each passing day the hosts of those who have seen and admired will increase. The Board, conscious of the fact that they have faithfully brought a good work, knowing that their thought and effort have aided in the erection of a Capitol at once most impressive and reasonable in cost, await with entire confidence the approval of the people.

SAMUEL W. PENNYPACKER,
W. P. SNYDER.

EXPENSES OF THE NEW CAPITOL BUILDING.

Special designed fireproof cases for filing and preserving of records and papers,	\$1,534,856 20
Furniture, desks, chairs, tables, etc.,	876,066 40
Painted panels, wainscoating, mantels and designed wood work,	889,940 00

Bacarat cut glass panels,	138,757 09
Bronze postoffice fronts, gallery, railing and stairs, in House and Senate, library, screen in Treasury Department and bronze trimmings on all special fireproof filing cases,	400,000 00
Designed glass mosaic,	28,759 20
Bronze railing,	2,754 80
Marble wainscoating, mantels, bases,	278,109 47
Constructions for flues, fire places, etc.,	21,237 59
Raised ornamentation, gilding, decorating and paint- ing,	779,472 96
Mural art painting,	14,660 50
Interlocking hardwood parquetry flooring,	142,412 47
Modeling and sculpture with patterns,	137,600 00
Vaults and safes,	66,000 00
Carpets, rugs, hangings and curtains,	14,044 42
Designed clocks and clock fittings,	32,079 20
Monumental Art Bronze standards, chandeliers, brackets in the three chief departments of the government (Exec- utive, Legislative, and Judicial), main entrance, dome, House, Senate, ante rooms, caucus rooms, Supreme Court room and Executive reception room: Standards, \$436,950 40 Chandeliers and brackets, 630,606 95	
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	1,067,557 35
Special designed bronze electric chandeliers and brackets in the subordinate departments,	981,965 61
Installation of thermostats and valves throughout the building, special work in connection with heating and ventilating, also air compressors,	59,408 00
Additions and alterations to electric lighting through- out the building,	71,833 00
Cement flooring throughout the building to receive the finished parquetry flooring,	25,117 77
Temporary alterations, fittings, carpets, electric lights, furniture, etc., for House and Senate com- mittee rooms and departments,	45,351 16
Labor and material furnished by George F. Payne and Company in constructing the eighth floor for the use of new departments and committee rooms, installing wires for two telephone and two telegraph systems throughout the building,	303,693 14
Edwin A. Abbey, account of mural art painting con- tract,	17,666 73
Joseph M. Huston, account of architect commission, ..	15,000 00
	235,000 00
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	\$8,179,343 06

ORDERED AND NOT YET PAID FOR UNDER
CONTRACT.

Balance due J. H. Sanderson, decorations and painting,	10,000 00
Balance due J. H. Sanderson according to letter of May 2nd, 1906, (not less) \$50,000; and not more than	100,000 00
Parquetry flooring,	106 20
Balance due Edwin A. Abbey, contract mural painting,	207,887 50
Balance due J. M. Huston, architect com- mission, 4 per cent.,	104,585 42
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422,579 12

Amount expended, or to be expended by the Capitol Commission,	4,000,000
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	\$12,601,922
Estimates for furnishings, etc., ordered by direction of the Board of Grounds and Buildings and not yet delivered for the new Capitol,	2,500

This does not include the amount of \$550,000 which had been appropriated by Act April 14th, A. D. 1897.

The opportunity was afforded to the State Treasurer, to other member of the Board, to sign the above statement and it was declined. The declination requires us to take one further step. We think it is to be regretted that one holding State office of great responsibility should prefer to make general allegations upon the stump rather than to give exact information in his official capacity. He is reported to have said that the parquetry flooring cost from \$400,000 to \$500,000 and was no better than that in the hall upon which he was then standing. If he was incorrectly reported it shows the danger of treating serious subjects in such a manner. These are the facts: Upon the general schedule for 1905 was the item of ordinary parquetry flooring and the contract was awarded to Payne & Co. at 90 cents per square foot. On the special schedule was the flooring for the new Capitol requiring hard wood dovetailed and secured in the cement, a more expensive kind of flooring. The contract was awarded, after advertising, to Sanderson for \$1.27½ per square foot and he did some of the work. After starting he for some reason gave up the contract. This fact does not indicate excessive profit. Payne & Co. offered to construct the special flooring under their contract upon the general schedule and since this meant a saving to the State of 37½ cents a foot the offer was accepted. In this way the Board secured the better and more expensive kind of flooring at a price which the State Treasurer himself has shown that he is willing to pay for one which is of cheaper and less substantial character, for the State Treasurer has signed the contract under the schedule for 1905 which again awards the ordinary parquetry flooring at 90 cents a square foot and has thus inferentially shown by his official conduct that in his judgment the special flooring was secured at a low rate. It has cost \$142,412.47 instead of from \$400,000 to \$500,000 as has been incorrectly published.

SAMUEL W. PENNYPACKER,

W. P. SNYDER.

HARRISBURG, PA., Sept. 26, 1906.